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OSD review completed

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The Director of Central Intelligence

Washington, D. C. 20505

Executive Registry

83-2199

25X1

25 April 1983

MEMORANDUM FOR: DDCI
C/LA

FROM: DCI

SUBJECT Central America

Attachment for your information and
comment.



William J. Casey

Attachments:

Memorandum dated 21 April from Fred Ikle
and paper, "Central America"

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C-352

XREF L-204A

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THE UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20301

April 21, 1983



POLICY

MEMORANDUM FOR WILLIAM CASEY

FROM: Fred Ikle

SUBJECT: The President's Speech on Central America (U)

In my view, we are at a decisive watershed in our policy toward Central America and the Caribbean: either the President can turn around the Congressional mood and break the shackles they imposed on his policy, or his Central American policies are bound to fail. And if we do not handle it wisely, the failure will be blamed on the President, instead of on the obstruction by Congress.

At this critical juncture, we must not become too impressed by the irresponsible positions of our Congressional critics. Many members share with us a deep concern about the dangers of spreading Communism in the region and all that it entails. Many members who are not our normal supporters are begging us for a bold policy that could promise a chance at success.

We should never have maneuvered ourselves into a position where we negotiate with four Congressional committees for over a month to reprogram [redacted] while the law demands only 15 days notification of such reprogramming. And we should not elevate Congressman Long and others into roles coequal to that of the Secretary of State.

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In my view, the President's speech next week ought to challenge Congress, either to give him the tools to succeed in this vital region, or to accept the blame for failure. The key message should be that if our involvement in the region is not designed to succeed, then we should not be involved at all. In particular, we must plan and provide for military victory in El Salvador, we cannot (contrary to Barnes position) succeed by planning on a military stalemate. A stalemate would merely encourage the enemies of ~~the~~ democracy to fight on indefinitely, until we give up. This point, too, has to be made very clear by the President.

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Declassify on: 21 April 1989

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